

THE
PHILANTHROPIST:
OR,
INSTITUTIONS
OR
BENEVOLENCE
BY A PENNSYLVANIAN.

Cold sweet Bore of ice, with all thy charm,
To poor encircle in thy fondling arms,
Diffuse thy smiles through all the haunt of woe,
And cheer the friendless with thy genial glow.

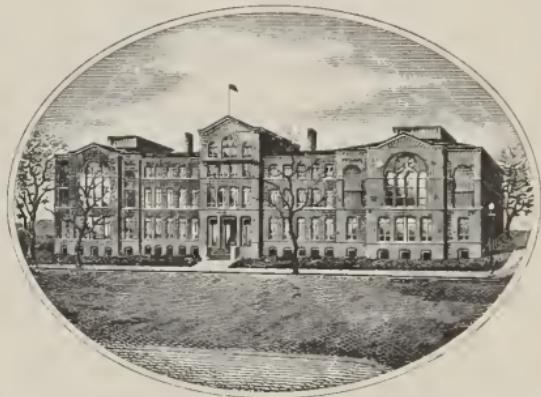
PHILADELPHIA.
PUBLISHED BY ISAAC PEIRCE.

No. 12, South Fourth Street

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.....
1813.

District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

***** BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighth day of
L. S. November, in the thirty-eighth year of the Independence
***** of the United States of America, A. D. 1813, ISAAC
PEIRCE, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the
title of a book the right whereof he claims as Proprietor in the
words following, to wit:

"The Philanthropist: or, Institutions of Benevolence. By a
Pennsylvanian.

"Come, sweet Benevolence, with all thy charms,
The poor encircle in thy fondling arms;
Diffuse thy smiles through all the haunts of woe,
And cheer the friendless with thy genial glow."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, intituled, "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the Times therein mentioned."— And also to the act, entituled, "An Act supplementary to an act, entituled "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies during the Times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other Prints."

D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the District of Pennsylvania

PREFACE.

“In every work regard the writer’s end.”

THE following little treatise is presented to a benevolent public, for their candid perusal. As the subject is plain and simple, so also is the style; and it is hoped that the matter will not be less interesting on this account.

I make no sort of apology for keeping my name from the public view. It is of no consequence who is the author, provided the matter be both true and useful; and if it should prove to be neither, my name would add nothing to its merit.

I have treated more fully on the subject of Charity Schools, than on any other topic; because I conceive it to be of the utmost importance. If it should be thought strange, that Medicine should find a place in a work of this nature, I can only say, that “as the science of medicine is related to every thing,”

of course it cannot be entirely irrelevant to the present work.

I hope that the little book will not be altogether uninteresting. If it should be ultimately successful in adding to the comfort and happiness of the poor, I shall be contented, that the labour of my leisure hours has not been altogether in vain.

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THE

PHILANTHROPIST.

CHAPTER I.

*Of Philanthropy—Its relation to Benevolence—
Exercise of it.*

IN all ages of the world, the benevolent affections have been admired. Philanthropy has long occupied an exalted rank, in the list of social virtues, and still commands the highest respect. It is inseparably connected with benevolence, since the one cannot exist without the other. They are at all times, the brightest gems that adorn the human character; they conceal many defects, that would otherwise be considered, as odious deformities. Hence, it is said, “that charity covereth a multitude of sins.”

The great variety of miserable objects and unhappy circumstances in the world, removes all difficulty in finding room, for the exercise of the benevolent affections. “As I look only for the miserable,” says an eminent wri-

ter, “ I have no occasion for a lantern.” The wretched are to be found every where, and at all times ; and we cannot avoid them, unless, indeed, we are bent on doing so. The cries of the distressed, may be heard every where around us, and the groans of the dying daily salute our ears.

There is a great deal of speculative benevolence in the world, much of verbal charity. If you would behold proofs of the assertion, visit the theatre, and observe the momentary sighs, and trickling tears, that flow at the recital of a tale of woe. The tender female, said the great and good Rush, that mourns over the sorrows of the distressed, as they are represented on the stage, will often hear, with indifference, the cries of the needy, and turn, with haughty indignation, the half-starved beggar from her door.

Connoisseurs, says St. Pierre, are rapt with admiration at sight of a Savoyard’s head, painted by *Greuze* ; but the Savoyard himself is at the corner of the street, speaking, walking, almost frozen to death, and no one minds him. That mother, with her children around her, forms a charming group ; the picture is invaluable ; the originals are in a neighbouring garret, without a farthing whereupon to subsist.

How great is the fanaticism that pervades the human mind ! Strange that the affections should yield to the impulse of imaginary

woes, and remain insensible to the powers of reality ! But it is unfortunately, too true, that the tenderness and sympathy of many, consists in nothing more, than this ephemeral display of compassionate feeling. Some satisfy their consciences on the score of benevolent actions, if perchance, they have relieved a suffering fellow creature, in the act of promoting their own pecuniary interests. But this is not benevolence ; nor can any act merit that appellation, unless the grand aim, is the good of the object for whose relief, it is performed. If any thing, of right, appertain to self in the exercise of charity, it is the pleasing satisfaction of having discharged a duty to a fellow man, by providing for his wants, or alleviating the pangs of disease.

The great art of doing good depends on the manner of doing it. If prudence be not attended to in the administration of charity, if our benevolence be not regulated by judgment, it will sometimes prove an injury, rather than a benefit. The way of acting prudently and judiciously in this business, is eloquently enforced in that important maxim, "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." If this be observed, we shall never err, and the end of our benevolence will be accomplished. The point in question, may be well illustrated by an anecdote of Rousseau, told by himself. One day, says he, I happened to be at a village festival, in a gentleman's

country seat, not far from Paris. After dinner, the company betook themselves to walking up and down the fair, and amused themselves with throwing pieces of small money among the peasantry, to have the pleasure of seeing them scramble and fight, in picking them up. For my own part, following the bent of my solitary humour, I walked apart in another direction. I observed a little girl selling apples, displayed in a flat basket, which she carried before her. To no purpose, did she extol the excellence of her goods; no customer appeared to cheapen them. How much do you ask for all your apples? said I to her.—All my apples? replied she, and at the same time, began to reckon with herself.—Threepence, Sir, said she.—I take them at that price, returned I, on condition you will go and distribute them among those little Savoyards whom you see below; this was instantly executed. The children were quite transported with delight at this unexpected regale, as was likewise the little merchant at bringing her wares to so good a market. I should have conferred much less pleasure on them, had I given them the money. Every one was satisfied, and no one humbled.

Much evil is often done by giving alms, without judgment. The beggar, whose petition for a trifle to buy him bread, has obtained a few cents, will often convert the charity of the donor, into a great evil, by wasting

it at the next tippling house. Instances of this sort, are to be met with daily in our city, and they should suffice to make the benevolent observe more prudence and judgment.

The venerable author of the *Studies of Nature*, has displayed the tender feelings of his sympathising soul, in glowing colours. He has suggested various plans, for the relief of the poor, founded on the benevolent sentiments of his great mind. He relates a story of a beautiful female, whose melancholy appearance attracted his attention. He sought an interview with her, and having obtained it, he learned, that her husband had lately become a bankrupt. Having heard her sorrowful history thus far, he enquired "to what parish she belonged." Her reply was "to St. Eustache." "The Rector of your parish," said he, "passes for a very good charitable man."—"Yes Sir," said she, "but you need not to be informed, that there is no charity in parishes for us miserable Jews." At these words, her tears began to flow more copiously, and she arose to go on her way. He then tendered a small pittance for her present relief, requesting her to accept it, at least as a mark of good will. "She received it, and returned me more reverences," says the writer, "and loaded me with more benedictions, than if I had re-established her husband's credit."

What satisfaction and real pleasure must have pervaded the bosom of this benevolent

man ! How many delicious banquets of enjoyment might be realised, by thus expending, three or four hundred pounds a year ! He only knows the value of money, who has learned how to appropriate it to a happy use. The miser is a stranger to such pleasure, for his wealth is held sacred by him not to be handled, except to satisfy the necessities of life.

Many persons, urged by the earnest solicitations of a beggar at their door, give a small sum of money, for two reasons ; the first is, that they may get rid of what they esteem a nuisance ; the second, that they may avoid the imputation of being hard-hearted. A donation under such circumstances, is not entitled to the appellation of a benevolent action. The ultimate good to be obtained, is centered in self, and not in the miserable creature, who receives the alms. The money is bestowed, without reflecting for a moment, to what purpose it may be applied. And in a majority of such cases, the trifle received is made an instrument of increasing the distress of the unhappy wretch.

But if real benevolence pervaded the bosoms of such persons, if the welfare of their fellow men was the inciting cause to the exercise of charity, very different effects would result from their conduct. Instead of giving money indiscriminately, they would enquire minutely into the circumstances of every case, and regulate their conduct accordingly. It is

not, perhaps, an exaggeration of the case, to say, that one half of the miseries of the poor might be prevented, by the judicious exercise of benevolent designs.

The indigence of the commonalty is the first cause of the physical and moral maladies of the rich. It is the business of those who possess the power, to provide a remedy. When I speak of the indigence of the commonalty, let it not be supposed, that I mean mere bodily want ; this is but trifling in its nature, compared to mental indigence. The evil must be corrected by commencing with the education of the poor. Give them a sufficient degree of learning to make them what men should be, rational creatures, and it will require but little exertion to eradicate the evil that remains.

The education of the poor, therefore, shall claim our attention in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

General remarks on the human mind—Establishment of Free Schools—Another plan, of a more liberal nature, suggested—Importance of such institutions.

“ ‘Tis education forms the common mind,
Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined.”

THE natural powers of the human mind bespeak something of nobility, something of real dignity, that claims and should receive our strictest regard. The highest faculty perceptible in the brute creation, amounts to nothing more exalted than mere instinct. This, it is true, is eminently adapted to all their wants, and in itself adequate to every exigency.

But the mind of man assumes a nobler attitude; it possesses not only such faculties as are requisite for its own being, but it is often made subservient to the good of others. It is the most sublime model of perfection in all the operations of creative wisdom. It occupies the highest pinnacle of true greatness, of superior dignity.

The improvement and refinement of this admirable part of the human fabric, is dependent on education. By means of this agent,

the rudeness, and often the deformity of nature, is removed.

For the purpose of giving more general extent to the utility of education, governments have wisely established institutions, for the purpose of giving instruction to the poor, free of expense. These institutions have been different in their system of government, according to the different views of their founders and promoters.

The constitution of the state of Pennsylvania, has provided for the education of poor children, in such general terms, as have left to the judgment of legislative bodies, to decide on the plans of such establishments. Unfortunately, however, very little has been effected, and the number of poor schools is very small.

When it is remembered that the improvement of every succeeding generation must depend very materially on the greater or less diffusion of learning among children; when it is further recollected, that the brightest genius may often lie concealed in the obscurity of a miserable hut, capable of being roused into active life by the stimulus of a little education, who is there, that does not immediately perceive the importance of attending carefully to the education of poor children.

If it were necessary, many examples of the good effects of educating poor children, might be easily adduced. There have been not a

few men, illustrious for their usefulness in life, famous for their mental perfections, who received the germs of their education in charity schools.

But the importance of education to children of inferior capacities, is abundantly evident. What sight can be more truly lamentable, than that of a person passing through the period of youth, and at last attaining to manhood, without the ability to write or to read his own name ! How liable are such people to imposition ! And in addition to this, under what a pressure of the most poignant mortification must they not frequently labour ! It is to be regretted, that a definite degree of education, is not exacted by law from masters, to every indented person. It is true, indeed, that this important object is generally attended to by parents and guardians, but it is nevertheless true, that many are indented without any provision of this kind. It might be supposed, that masters would not be so negligent of those under their charge, as to suffer their time of service to expire, without giving them as much instruction as would tend, at least, to save them from frequent imposition. But it is, unfortunately, a truth, that these persons often care for nothing but the faithful services of those under them, and having attained this object, they are careless of the real welfare of their servants. They do place them sometimes on an equal footing

with their brutes; but a fine horse is frequently esteemed an object of infinitely more concern, than a servant who has been faithful for many years. These unfortunate characters are not fit subjects for a charity school, because, as in most cases, the circumstances of masters would easily enable them to educate their servants, they should not be classed with those who are objects of charity. Hence, the importance of obliging masters, in all cases, to educate their servants, or to have them educated, is made more apparent. Under such circumstances, the effects of education, could not fail to become more general, and to render every succeeding generation, less illiterate.

Much has been said, at various times, relative to the proper mode of conducting charity schools. The subject is so important, that much more may be advanced, without exhausting it or rendering a system absolutely perfect.

Charity schools should be established by our legislatures, in towns, villages and townships, throughout the state; and their number in the thinly settled parts of country, should be proportioned to the population. If error be suffered to exist at all, with regard to the number of such seminaries, it were better to have too many, than otherwise. This is a point however, that could be decided with very little difficulty.

Some uniform routine of education should be established, and the same kinds of books should be in general use in all the schools. This is a matter of economy: because a large quantity of elementary books could be printed for this purpose, at a less expense, than would attend the purchase of a great variety. Another advantage, not less important, would follow the observance of this rule, as may be forcibly shewn by supposing a case. A child that has been initiated into the forms of one school, and who has made considerable progress in learning, might be under the necessity of removing into an adjacent township. Now in this case, a material disadvantage would accrue to the scholar, if his new tutor observed a different routine of education, and made use of other books. The scene would be somewhat novel, and could not fail to perplex. But if the same routine were uniformly observed, the scholar would find no difficulty in continuing in his former course. He would in the one case lose much by the change of situation, while in the other he would lose nothing.

The superintendence of such institutions is a point of less consequence. New officers might be provided for by law, or officers already acting in certain capacities, might be further authorised to superintend these schools. County commissioners might be vested with

power to regulate the schools, to appoint tutors, &c.

If it be deemed proper to admit others, than charity scholars to such seminaries, it would be necessary that no distinction should exist between the scholars. The good of such institutions requires that all the scholars should be treated alike, and that those who are on the charity list, should not be known as such to the rest of the scholars.

The propriety of admitting any who are not objects of charity, to such institutions, is, however, very questionable. The distinctions which would be apt to arise, from a great variety of unforeseen circumstances, would in all cases, have a powerful influence in frustrating the ultimate design. On this account, it would, no doubt, be much more prudent, to make such schools, charity institutions entirely.

The tutors of such seminaries should be carefully selected ; they should possess, in addition to all the qualifications of honest and upright men, those finer feelings of soul, which flow from the glowing heart of the real philanthropist. They should be kind ; as desirous of advancing the mental interest of their pupils, as of increasing the weight of their purses by the emoluments of office.

I have said that tutors should be honest and upright men, but my meaning was that of common acceptation. Let them, however,

be truly honest, according to the most extensive application of that term, and, they will then be just such characters, as are proper to teach charity scholars.

Previous to the admission of any child, it would be well to exact from the parents or guardians, some satisfactory assurance, that the child on attaining to a proper age, should be sent to learn such a trade or sort of business, as might best suit capacity and inclination. This may be deemed rather too severe; but a little attention will discover the contrary to be true. For all parents, having a real desire to promote the welfare of their children, would cheerfully submit to such a regulation. The very indulgent parent, who would think it criminal to enter into an engagement of this nature, would be very apt to do even worse than to keep his children at home. He would do so, by neglecting to compel the strictest attendance at school hours, or rather by suffering his children to stay at home, whenever they might be desirous of gratifying their caprice.

What would be the expense of such an enlarged plan of education? is the cry of the economist. But, is expense to be an object of such serious consideration, in the accomplishment of so important an end? I cannot believe that such contracted sentiments can have existence in the breast of a sincere friend to the best interests of mankind.

But let us enquire a little what would be the probable expense. One hundred buildings proper for schools might be erected, for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars; the ground need not cost the state any thing, because, owners of land would be willing to appropriate a small spot to so laudable a purpose. The annual expenses, would be composed of the salary to the tutors, the stationary, keeping the schools in repair, firewood, &c. all of which would not amount to more than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The books necessary for the scholars, might be obtained, by engaging a public printer, at a lower rate, than in any other way. The cost of these, would be perhaps fifty thousand dollars; an expense which could not be necessary more than once in twenty or thirty years.

The annual expenses of these establishments would scarcely be perceived by the individuals of the community, if collected by taxation. It would be so trifling, as that no person however parsimonious could complain. The ultimate benefit, that would necessarily follow such a measure, would be incalculable. Our poor children would become better men, and more useful citizens, and much of the lost dignity of man, would be thereby regained.

Such a plan as this would be eminently advantageous to society; but a much more liberal system might be adopted, with more profit to the poor. The system, which I am

about to state, being necessarily attended with heavy expenses, would not be apt to meet legislative patronage. This is no reason, however why such a system should not be made a business of state. The buildings necessary in this plan should be sufficiently large to contain two or three hundred scholars. These should be divided into four distinct portions, two of them composed of the males and the other two of the females. It would consequently be necessary to have four separate school rooms.

The direction of the schools should be placed in the hands of a steward and matron, who should likewise perform the duties of tutors. These, with a male and female usher, would make up the necessary complement of tutors. If, however, it would be more advantageous, that all the tutors should be males, this regulation might easily be adopted, without interfering with the present plan.

The buildings being sufficiently capacious, those children who could not be maintained at home, might be kept at the institution. It would be well to have all the scholars clothed alike, and at the expense of the directors. If it were possible to have all the children residing in the institution, it would be still more judicious. It would then be an easy task, to make the school evince that uniform appearance, which is at all times, highly gratifying, in such an establishment. The improvement

of the scholars would be then much more certain, because the familiarity which would necessarily subsist between tutor and pupil, would better acquaint the former, with the inclination and ability of the latter. Another advantage resulting from the permanent residence of the scholars in the seminary, would be their regular attendance at school hours; in addition to this, the scholars would be prevented from spoiling their clothes, and injuring their persons from the various causes to which they are exposed, when running at large.

The pupils should be kept at this seminary until that period, in which it is proper that some kind of business should be taught to them, by which they may gain a livelihood. The regulation already mentioned, should be here enforced; I mean that of compelling parents or guardians to agree, that their children or wards, should, at the proper time, go to learn some trade or occupation. This part of the plan is indispensably necessary, in order to insure a happy and profitable issue to the undertaking.

As it is probable, that among so many children, there would be some who would evince very promising talents, it would be well to devote a part of the funds of the institution to give to such persons all the advantages of a classical education, and finally, to have them instructed in one of the liberal professions. Thus, after the lapse of a few years, the direc-

tors of the seminary might enjoy the heart-cheering satisfaction, of beholding as an ornament of the bar, as a pillar of the church, or as a shining light in the medical profession, one who had received the germs of education in the temple of charity. How delightful the reflection, how sublime the prospect ! Oh that the coffers of the East, or the massy mines of Peru were mine ! I would erect such a temple, such an edifice, such a refuge from ignorance and oppression. On either side, I would place this simple motto,

THE FRIEND OF THE FRIENDLESS.

Is there not one among the multitude, whose circumstances would enable him to carry such a plan into execution ? Is there not one, whose tender soul, glowing with the flame which burned in the bosom of the great Howard, is eager to soar above the common dispensations of charity, the scanty gifts of nominal benevolence ? If there be such a character among the sons of affluence, the road to deathless fame, to glorious immortality is here.

If any one desire to dispose of his money in this way, I will take the liberty of dictating his last will and testament. Suppose him to be worth two millions of dollars, or thereabouts ; the plan is easy. Let five hundred thousand dollars be appropriated to the purchase of ground, the erection of the buildings, and the necessary furniture, &c. The remain-

ing one million, five hundred thousand dollars, would yield an interest of ninety thousand dollars: which would be quite sufficient to defray all the annual expenses of the institution, and to educate the more promising pupils, in the manner already stated. The disposition of the whole business might be left to any number of persons that might be deemed necessary. These might be styled the Trustees of the institution, who should be authorised to appoint tutors, &c. according to the plan of the founders of the establishment.

If it were desirable to receive some pecuniary remuneration from such an institution, this end might be accomplished by enlarging the present plan. Buildings might be erected on the grounds of the institution, suitable for work-shops, in which the different trades, manufactures, &c. might be conducted. Opportunities would here present of instructing many of the pupils, at the proper period, in such business as would best suit their talents and inclination. They should be still maintained in the institution; and their labour in the different occupations would be a considerable aid in enlarging the funds. This rule, of course, is applicable only to pupils of inferior capacity. It is related of the Chinese, that when they desire to know the particular trade or occupation most suitable for their children, they make them drink ardent spirits

till they become intoxicated. In this state they take them into a room, in which are placed the various tools of the different mechanical arts; and the inclination and peculiar talent of each is inferred from the particular tools which he handles and appears to admire the most. Thus if the child chance to play with a thimble or a pair of shears, he is thence destined to the shopboard of the tailor for life.

Although the mode just stated, may suit the inclinations of the Chinese, it would not be very apt to answer for the children of this country. It is not a difficult matter, to learn by a little care, the particular kind of business to which the child will be best adapted. At all events, it is possible to obtain this knowledge without the disagreeable necessity of resorting to the abuse of ardent spirits.

But I have been extending my views to the utmost bounds of practicable utility. The day that shall give birth to such an establishment, will be the most illustrious of all days. On that its morning sun may quickly rise, and the splendour of its dawning light soon irradiate a world of ignorance and error!

Although this plan may not be put in execution for many years to come, yet the first I have mentioned may be realised ere long. Being made a business of state, the expenses incident to the establishment, would bear equally upon all, and oppress none.

The state of Pennsylvania has thus far occupied a high rank in the literary world. Her medical school has become the ornament of our country and the admiration of the universe; and the diffusion of learning, by means of Free schools, throughout the state, will add additional lustre to her literary character.

It is criminal negligence in our legislatures, not to attend strictly and perseveringly to so important a concern; a concern which affects in the most material manner the welfare of the community. Is the improvement of the human mind an affair of less magnitude, than the formation of turnpike roads, the building of bridges, or the erection of new county towns? Are the benefits resulting from the latter, to be placed in competition with those which necessarily accompany the former? It might be supposed that this were really the fact, from a view of the conduct of those to whom the concerns of state are entrusted.

Perhaps there is an assignable cause for such conduct. Men who exert themselves to have turnpikes formed, or to have bridges built, are, generally speaking, immediately concerned in those affairs; or if not concerned themselves, others are interested, who are men of influential characters, and who of course must not be offended. Legislators hope by such acts to bring themselves into greater favor with the leading characters of the county to which they belong. They have no such in-

citements, however, or think they have not, to exert themselves in the establishment of Free schools. I do not assert that this is the fact, but their conduct justifies such suspicions, and the very nature of ambitious men gives further confirmation.

Vice, poverty, and misery in every shape, are but too often the sad concomitants of ignorance. Beneath its oppressive yoke, the noble faculties of the soul are bowed down in slavish inactivity. The sublime operations of the mind are enveloped in the maze of error, and exist only in a passive state. How long shall it be thus with our race! may the time speedily arrive when man shall appreciate his own mental powers, by a due regard to the faculties of his fellow man! The poor are no less our brethren, on account of their poverty. They are children of the same common parent with ourselves, and as such, are entitled to our friendly care. The assistance we give them for the preservation and health of their bodies, is of trivial consequence, compared with that aid, which is necessary to the refinement of their intellectual powers. It is this alone, that can effectually succeed, in ameliorating their miserable condition. It is this, only, that can insure to the mind, its real dignity and value.

While I am on the subject of Education, it may be proper to state a few objections to some practices of schools generally, which must be,

at all times, of pernicious tendency, but particularly so in Free schools.

The spirit of emulation, so frequently instilled into young pupils, however admired by some, is absolutely injurious. It renders them through life, intolerant, vain-glorious and tremblingly alive to the slightest censure. Such effects should be carefully avoided in a charity seminary, and in their place, all the amiable virtues should be cherished. The latter will tend greatly to counteract many of the unhappy concomitants of indigence.

“Is not a child,” says an eminent writer, “influenced by the emulation of schools, under the necessity of renouncing it from the very first step he makes in the world, if he means to be supportable to his equals and to himself? The world itself obliges him to mask the hideous aspect of the faults of Education. Thus a fine perspective is opened to human life, in which we are constrained to employ the half of our days, in destroying, with a thousand painful efforts, what had been raised up in the other, with so many tears, and so much parade.”

CHAPTER III.

General remarks—Considerations on the Almshouse—Asylum for the Insane poor—Expenses—Hospitalities, &c., &c.

“ My cradle was the couch of care,
 And sorrow rock’d me in it;
 Fate seem’d her saddest robe to wear
 On the first day that saw me there,
 And darkly shadow’d with despair
 My earliest minute.

“ Even then the griefs I now possess,
 As natal boons were given;
 And the fair form of happiness
 Which hover’d round, intent to bless,
 Scared by the phantoms of distress,
 Flew back to heaven.

For I was made in joy’s despite,
 And meant for misery’s slave.
 And all my hours of brief delight
 Flew like the speedy winds of night,
 Which soon shall wheel their sullen flight
 Across my grave.”

“ O POVERTY !” exclaimed one of its victims, “ thou half-sister of death, where shall I find force of execration equal to the amplitude of thy demerits ? Oppressed by thee, the venerable ancient, grown hoary in the practice of virtue, laden with years and

wretchedness, implores a little, little aid to support his existence, from a stony-hearted son of Mammon, whose sun of prosperity never knew a cloud; and is by him, denied and insulted. Oppressed by thee, the man of sentiment, whose heart glows with independence, and melts with sensibility, only pines under the neglect, or writhes in bitterness of soul, under the contumely of arrogant, unfeeling wealth. Oppressed by thee, the son of genius, whose ill-starred ambition plants him at the tables of the fashionable and politic, must see in suffering silence his remark neglected, and his person despised, while shallow greatness, in his hideous attempts at wit, shall meet with countenance and applause. Nor is it only the family of worth that have reason to complain of thee; the children of folly and vice, though in common with thee, the offspring of evil, smart equally under thy rod."

Well might the soul formed in the mould of sensibility, thus exclaim, on beholding the miseries of human life. Alas! the gloom of distress thickens around, and becomes dark as the blackness of night, the longer we behold the scenes of wretchedness in the world. If health smile on the haggard gloom, it may for a while dissipate a portion of the sorrow that reigns around. But, alas, how often do we behold her roses withered, by the chilling blasts of disease! The half-clad form, whose cheeks so lately beamed with healthful bloom,

that seemed to lessen the miseries of poverty, now stretched on the bed of sickness, is a picture of woe, which puts all description at defiance. View the laborious father of a large and indigent family, thus situated! The beloved groupe, who have learned to depend on him for support, are now pining in want, and almost perishing around him. It is such a view as this, that exhibits poverty arrayed in her most terrific garb, heaping torture on torture, and rendering existence miserable, by her multiplied pangs of woe.

One would suppose that in a world like this, there would be ample sources for the happiness of mankind. If it were a small and contracted theatre, on which men must stand constantly in each other's way, the case would be quite different; it would be madness to expect any thing better for the majority of our race, than misery. But, the world is large enough; if indeed there be any fault, it is, that there is too much unoccupied space in it. When we cast but a glimpse over it, and make but a partial survey of creation, how vast, how wonderful the prospect! The almost infinite diversity of objects and characters between the two great extremes of nature, the animate and inanimate, attract our notice and claim our closest attention.

We behold in the universe an ample supply of variety and utility, destined to satisfy the wants of mankind. Nature has diffused

her blessings with a bounteous hand, throughout the vast domains of creation. She has placed the necessities of life, and many of its luxuries, within the reach of all men. From what source then, it is asked, proceed the miseries, the calamities of the human race? Do they arise from any defect in the objects presented to man for his enjoyment? No; the fault lies not here, but in the depravity of human nature. Men, by a fatal delusion, are led to make improper estimates of their own welfare, and the means of promoting it. Hence arise the storms of adversity, pregnant with all the miseries and disasters of human life.

I am of opinion, with a late writer, that one step towards relieving the indigence of the commonalty, is to diminish the excessive opulence of the rich. It is not by them that the people live, as many politicians have pretended. It would be necessary, says the same writer, in order to check unbounded opulence, without, however, doing injustice to the rich, to put an end to the venality of employments, which confers them all on that portion of society which needs them the least, as the means of subsistence, for it gives them to those who have money. But this is by no means a sufficient remedy; something more is requisite, to reduce all men to the same level. Half the misery in the world would be abolished, if man could but be taught to view his brother, not as an inferior being, but

as "bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh," and in all respects, like himself, a mere man.

A man, by little better than accident, suddenly acquires a large fortune. What is the consequence? He ceases to be the man he was before, and assumes as many haughty airs of self consequence, as if he were something more dignified, than a miserable wretch. He expects to be flattered, adored, and alas! for human nature, he is not often disappointed. The poor man, who was but lately on the same footing with himself, his companion in indigence, is scorned, avoided, and regarded as a creature of too mean condition to be any longer an associate.

Fortunately, however, such arrogance is sometimes justly rewarded. Riches have wings, we are told, and such men often experience the truth of the saying. The wealth that has been amassed so suddenly, is often as quickly lost, and the miserable creature is then of all others, the most wretched. All this is the result of that sentiment of inequality, which is so generally attached to affluence and indigence.

This evil is not incident to our country alone; it is common to all nations. There is in reality, less of it, here, than abroad, owing to the very nature of our government, and the advantages which we enjoy.

Perhaps the greater or less prevalence of poverty may be in some measure estimated,

according to the ignorance or information of the people. Many of the difficulties and distresses of the poor, arise from the want of education in early life. This defect not only subjects them to imposition from the designing, but it tends also to make them more depraved, more disposed to commit acts of impropriety.

To remedy the evil, many plans have been suggested, at different times, and in different ages of the world. The humane have employed all diligence to lessen the burden of distress and misery, to which the poor are exposed. They have used individual exertion, and in addition to this, they have occasionally associated themselves together, for the purpose of accomplishing, more effectually, their laudable designs.

Public edifices have been erected in all countries for the accommodation of the poor; and this country has not been less active, than those at a distance, in carrying into effect, the benevolent plans that have been formed at various times.

Let us attend for a few moments to the nature of these institutions.

Alms-Houses are generally destined for the reception of all descriptions of persons, who are unable to live by their own exertions, or to gain a livelihood from the assistance of friends. In this respect, they answer a proper and laudable purpose. They shelter from

the pitiless storm, the helpless and infirm, the orphan in distress, and the widow, friendless and forlorn. But still the plans of the best are not faultless. Not one of them is founded on those truly benevolent and liberal principles, which humanity dictates. This proceeds from a prevalence of that parsimonious spirit, which never accomplishes any thing above mere mediocrity. A few thousand dollars in addition to the usual expenditures would be amply adequate to render a charitable institution, what it should be.

Where, you ask, lies the evil, so much complained of? The answer is easy. On visiting an alms-house, we behold the virtuous and the vicious, those who have lived in affluence, and those who have always been the heirs of indigence, assembled in one room, forming one common society. This is the grand objection to institutions of Charity, but in addition to this, many more may be adduced.

An alms-house should be situated at a few miles distance, from the city or town to which it belongs. There are many reasons why such a situation should be preferred. The air of the country would have a happier tendency in correcting the unwholesome effluvia, that abounds within the walls of an alms-house. It would consequently be much more favourable to the recovery of the sick in such an institution. The paupers could be kept with less difficulty within the bounds. In a well

regulated institution, however, the detention of paupers should be strictly attended to. They should not be suffered to go out on any occasion, unless for purposes of necessity. As the alms-house of Philadelphia is now regulated, a pauper may receive admission on the approach of winter, and be supported until the next season, when he is allowed to remove from his winter residence. He is now in no danger of suffering from extreme cold, and by working a day or two in the week, or by begging, or stealing, he acquires the ability to keep soul and body in unity till the next winter, when he returns to his old quarters.

Is this charity? Call it by any other name, style it a virtue, if you think it be a virtue, but call it not charity. What! can that be a spirit of benevolence which fosters to destroy! Is that humanity, which caresses to make more miserable? No, it cannot be. It is not charity that succours the helpless from the chilling blasts of winter, and then resigns its objects to drunkenness, and to vice of every grade, for the remainder of the year. It is a non-descript sort of feeling, a kind of half-way charity, that is, unfortunately, but too popular.

If it be said, that such restraint as I advocate is inconsistent with the principles of liberty, I answer, that paupers, for the most part, are not fit persons to enjoy the blessing of liberty, as other people enjoy it. They

know not how to use without abusing it. They convert that into a great evil, which was intended to subserve the most extensive good. On this account, such persons are better in a state of confinement, than when they are suffered to run at large. They are then prevented from molesting others, while they also do themselves less injury, and often promote their real welfare.

But the greatest evil in our alms-house, and that to what I have already adverted, is the indiscriminate association of all characters in one common society. This evil, is so unnatural, so repugnant to common sense and reason, that I cannot but wonder that it has so long prevailed. How much better would it be, to have particular apartments allotted to particular classes. How many who have once lolled on the couch of ease, and enjoyed the pleasures and gaieties of life, are at last reduced to indigence, and feel the painful necessity of flying for refuge to an alms-house ! In such an institution, we often find those who have been nurtured with tenderness and have never known till now the miseries of poverty. We meet with those, who have lived uprightly, and whose reputations have never been impeached. On the other hand, an alms-house always contains many victims of folly, of vice in every shape.

The distinctions between integrity and depravity, virtue and vice, should not be en-

veloped by the regulations of a charitable institution. It should always be most strenuously attended to, and no institution can ever be truly benevolent, until this discrimination of characters, constitutes an essential feature in its government. Those who have been respectable in affluence should be assembled together. They should have a different kind of treatment, a different mode of support from those who have been and continue to be vicious. The latter sect should be divided into classes according to the degree or extent of their vicious propensities, and they should be properly corrected for their aberrations from rectitude, by a careful superintendent.

But, the objections now made, apply not only to a state of health ; they are much more applicable to disease.

The discrimination of characters should never be forgotten in the sick wards. The unhappy sufferer, who has once in his life time enjoyed the luxuries of the world, now tortured with bodily pains, will often sink beneath the additional pressure of mental disquiet, arising from the neglect of distinction between good and bad characters. How lamentable, how distressing to reflect, that even the last moments of life, are often rendered doubly miserable, by the selfish spirit of affected benevolence. Away with such contracted views ; they are disgraceful to civi-

lised society, and have no parallel in savage life.

The wards of an alms-house should be divided into small rooms; large enough for convenience, and well supplied with fresh and wholesome air. Not more than three or four sick persons should be contained in each room, and these should be associated according to the circumstances of character, &c.

It is of much consequence, that care should be had in the selection of nurses. The nurses commonly met with in an alms-house, are of doubtful character, at best, and not unfrequently, they are dishonest. I have known examples of the latter kind, and have seen fatal effects resulting from their improper conduct. Patients often suffer materially, and death has been sometimes accelerated from this source. It is plain, therefore, that all the measures which may be adopted for the comfort and convenience of the sick poor, will be frustrated, by neglecting to provide honest and careful nurses.

There is another evil in our charitable institutions, relative to the sick. There are no rooms provided, for those in a state of convalescence; a state which requires much care, not only to complete the cure, but likewise to avoid a relapse. On this account, it is obvious, that rooms should be allotted to this object alone. It would be much more agreeable to a physician attending such an institution;

it would be much more salutary to the patients, and would be better calculated to preserve order.

Regulations, such as those just mentioned, would give a new aspect to an alms-house. No longer would the virtuous poor, hesitate to enter the abodes of charity. Assured that their companions would still be such as they had always enjoyed, they would no longer refuse the proffered hand of benevolence. All descriptions of persons, being thus placed in their own proper conditions, and moving in their appropriate spheres, would then realise the blessings of charity, and remain contented with their situation. The miserable creature of deformity, and the tottering frame of old age, would no longer be seen, through all our streets, exciting commiseration and pity. Finding at last a comfortable home, they would fly to the open doors of hospitality, and rest in peace.

It is a fact worthy of being noticed, that the poor in giving aid to persons more indigent than themselves, always display more generosity in proportion to their circumstances, than the rich. The author of the studies of nature has a pleasing anecdote, illustrative of the truth of this remark. He once stopped to view a poor mendicant, seated on a post. A great many well-dressed people passed by, without giving him any thing; but there were very few servant-girls, or women loaded

with baskets, who did not stop to bestow their charity. He wore a well-powdered peruke, with his hat under his arm, was dressed in an old surtou, his linen white and clean, and every article so trim, that you would have thought these poor people were receiving alms from him and not giving them. It is impossible says the author to refer this sentiment of generosity in the common people to any secret suggestion of self interest, as the enemies of mankind alledge, in taking upon them to explain the causes of compassion.

I would attribute this superior generosity in the poor, to a more genuine, deep-seated sympathy, which pervades their breasts. They know by experience, the sorrows of want, and whenever they find an object more wretched than themselves, their ability to lessen his misery, if they possess such ability, is roused into active exertion, without delay.

The poor therefore, afford examples, which should be sufficient inducements to the affluent, to be more industrious in their labours of benevolence. But unfortunately, those who have the means to do good, frequently have no desire, while those who are anxious to relieve distress are destitute of the means.

I have often wondered that the charitable and humane had not seen the propriety of an establishment for the reception of the insane poor.* In some institutions it is true, a few

* See the Conclusion.

of this class find admittance ; but in such instances, it is esteemed a kind of favour, a deviation from prescribed rule.

An institution calculated to contain one hundred persons, and possessing all the conveniences proper in such an establishment, would do immortal honour to its founders, and would long stand as a monument of true benevolence, as the pride and glory of the state.

Such an institution, should receive, not only those who are insane, according to the general acceptation of the term, but it should be free of access to all indigent persons, convicted of that blackest of crimes, murder. The good sense of the late Dr. Rush, led him to reprobate in strong terms, the irrational practice of punishing by death, for the crime of murder. He wisely recommended, as a substitute, the mad-house. The unhappy culprit confined in the solitary cell, would be more severely punished, than he could possibly be, by any mode of death. By thus extending the design of a mad-house, we render an essential service to society. We thus discover that true spirit of benevolence, which flows only from the tender soul of the philanthropist. True benevolence is more closely concerned in the mental welfare of mankind, than in their bodily concerns. There is certainly much impropriety, in associating all kinds of convicts in the same common prison. There should,

unquestionably, be a distinction between those who have been but once convicted of crime, and those who have been notorious for their guilt. The former are made worse by being mixed with the latter, and the depravity of their hearts is thereby increased.

I think that much good would result from the establishment of a building, for the reception of persons, who had been seduced by old offenders, into the walks of vice. There collected, and well watched, they might frequently regain their lost character for virtue and respectability. "We bestow," said a great man, "much study and labour, in restoring the wandering reason of our fellow creatures, in supporting the vigour of their bodies, but we neglect their erring hearts. We erect splendid and commodious buildings to confine persons, whom intellectual derangement has rendered dangerous to society, and we employ our skill and humanity to relieve them; but with an unmerciful impatience, we consign persons, whom moral derangement has rendered mischievous, to the exterminating axe and halter; and those whose moral faculty has been less impaired, are destined, indiscriminately, to one common house of confinement."

There is more necessity for an asylum for poor persons, who have committed capital crimes, than for those in affluent circumstances; because, unfortunately, wealth has an astonishing power in lessening the enormity

of crime, in the popular opinion. But a poor man, despised already by many on account of his poverty, is now altogether forsaken ; and his crime is often viewed with more detestation, simply because he is poor. For this reason, an institution for the poor, whom moral derangement has induced to commit murder, must be desired by every truly benevolent man.

I think it is hardly necessary to say any thing on the propriety of substituting confinement in the place of capital punishment. The latter has been so justly deprecated by able writers, as to have effected an important revolution in popular sentiment. It is strange, that any person, calling himself a Christian, and professing to be a follower of the precepts of Christianity could have ever advocated the odious practice of taking away the life of any man, as reparation for the crime of murder. Strange indeed, " that Christians should continue to enforce the law, for shedding human blood, which was delivered upon mount Ararat, and many of the subsequent laws of the Jewish legislature for the same purpose, after their total repeal upon mount Calvary. In vain shall we expect to hear the whole truth from our witnesses in our courts of law, while its penalties are opposed by the dictates of humanity and justice. By substituting expiatory confinement and labour, and the power of medicine, according

to circumstances, for capital punishment ; and by rendering all other punishments less severe, and more certain, we shall restore the original harmony between the virtues, and thereby add greatly to the reputation of our courts, and to the order and happiness of society." Perhaps, it would not be prudent to devote a hospital to the reception of those convicts, whose circumstances of affluence would permit them to reside there. But, as the poor and rich are on an equal footing in relation to crime, it would be more judicious to prevent any sort of distinction between wealthy and indigent culprits. The institution should be known by a name, that would not carry with it, the least degree of odium, and it should be supported by taxation.

Those, however, whose circumstances would admit, should be charged a reasonable sum for their lodging and maintenance ; and the trustees of the institution should hold the property of such persons in trust, during confinement, and until their expenses should be defrayed.

But an institution of the sort just mentioned, differs materially from that which should be appropriated to the benefit of poor persons, who are insane, according to the general acceptance of that term. Such an institution is very much wanted, and would better characterise the benevolence of a people, than monuments of brass or marble. Its benefi-

cence would live in the memory of posterity, and the children's children of those who had been there restored to reason, would venerate the names of its worthy founders. May we not hope, that the day, when such an establishment shall be founded, is not far distant ! alas ! for suffering humanity, that it has not already arrived, that its benign influence has not long since cheered a world of woe.

While on the subject of establishments for the insane, it may not be amiss to introduce the following very sensible remarks of a benevolent man. "A great many physical remedies are employed for the cure of madness ; and it frequently proceeds from a moral cause, for it is produced by chagrin. Might there not be a possibility to employ, for the restoration of reason to those disordered beings, means directly opposed to those which occasioned the loss of reason ; I mean, mirth, pleasure, and above all, the pleasure of music ? We see, from the instance of *Saul*, and many others of a similar nature, what influence music possesses for re-establishing the harmony of the mind. With this ought to be united the most gentle treatment and care to place the unhappy patients, when visited with paroxysms of rage, not under the restraints of fetters, but in an apartment, matted round, where they could do no mischief to themselves or others. I am persuaded that, by employing such humane precautions, numbers might be

restored, especially if they were under the charge of persons who had no interest in perpetuating their derangement. It would likewise be proper, to commit the care of men disordered in their understanding, to females, and that of females to men, on account of the mutual sympathy of the sexes for each other.”*

The establishment of Dispensaries marked an important era in the history of benevolent and useful institutions. They have been the means of doing much good, and within their walls, the poor have realised the kindness of hospitality.

The Philadelphia Dispensary is the best institution of this sort, that is to be found in our country. It is supported by donations and annual contributions from charitable persons. These are called contributors, and they are at liberty to recommend objects to the care of the physicians attending the institution. The physicians receive no pecuniary emolument for their services, and are generally composed of young men. They attend at the institution to prescribe for patients who are able to go there, and they attend those who are unable to leave their home, at their place of residence.

Thus, much good is done for the sick poor. But I am sure that the plans of such institutions will admit of improvement. I have

* See *Studies of Nature*.

known many disadvantages to arise from what I conceive to be a defect in the plan of the Philadelphia Dispensary ; I mean that of neglecting to allow some sort of compensation for the services of the physicians. This is no fault of the founders and promoters of the institution ; because it is probable, they bestow as much to its support, as their circumstances will justify. The plan as it now exists, is probably quite as liberal, as the state of their funds will admit.

It may be said that physicians are easily obtained to perform the various duties required, without pecuniary reward. But I know from an acquaintance with the circumstances, that much less care and solicitude has been bestowed, than would be the case, if the physicians received salaries. It has been already stated that the physicians of such institutions are generally young men ; at all events, they are persons who have not been so fortunate as to acquire extensive business. For this very reason, if no other existed, some kind of salary should be annexed to the station. If men of talents and experience who had retired from business, and had become wealthy, would devote a part of their time to such institutions, the case would then be entirely otherwise, and a compensation would be unnecessary.

If such an institution were established by the state legislature, and its funds raised by

taxation, a better system of charity would be obtained, than is now in existence. If a tenth of the sum given by any contributor to the Dispensary, were required from every individual, in the way of taxation, it would not only be a more equable mode, but it would be a much more beneficial one; because all the objections to the present system, arising from deficient funds, would then be removed. The direction of the institution could be exactly as that of the Philadelphia Dispensary; that is, in the hands of a number of Managers.

From the very great benefits arising from the Dispensary in its present state, there is no doubt that much more good would result from an improvement of the plan, in the way that I have mentioned. It is to be lamented, that such institutions are not more generally encouraged. I am sure that in point of real service to society, the Philadelphia Dispensary is far preferable to the Pennsylvania Hospital, although the latter institution has occasionally received legislative patronage. The Dispensary is more truly an institution of benevolence. Its system is much more charitable, and its numerous patients are a sufficient evidence of its extensive utility.

But, nevertheless, I am not to be understood as depreciating the importance of the Hospital. Its promoters merit the thanks of all good men, in proportion to the degree of charity that has been displayed in that institution.

Another sort of charitable establishments; requires a little attention, I mean, the Hospitable societies of our city. I regret that the plan of our alms-house, is not of such a nature, as to preclude the necessity of such institutions. If that were correct, if discrimination of character constituted an essential feature in its government, if all were required to move in their proper spheres, these hospitable societies need not exist. I do not find fault with these societies, nor with their founders. I admire the one and venerate the other. It is the defect in our alms-house discipline, of which I complain, as causing much trouble and inconvenience to individuals, without the smallest degree of absolute necessity. These societies assist only such as are deemed worthy; the infamous and profligate are not noticed by them. The objects of these institutions, refuse the charity of the alms-house, for no other reason, than because they would there be liable to mix with the most depraved characters.

But as long as error prevails in the regulation of our alms-house, hospitable societies will be very necessary. Their promoters are justly entitled to the applause of mankind. Their charity is not of that speculative quality, which consists in words or professions. They test their principles by their actions of benevolence. They visit the miserable hut; clothe the naked and feed the hungry. And

what is their reward ? Is it the empty bubble of affected praise, the alluring enticement of pecuniary recompense ? Oh no ; they are rewarded by the grateful thanks of the widow and the fatherless, and the blessings of " him that was ready to perish," are liberally bestowed. Nor are these the only sources of satisfaction. The pleasing reflection of having soothed the sufferings of the distressed, of having ministered to the wants of the needy, is far more gratifying.

If it were possible for these societies, by any prudent means, to instruct the small children under their care, in the elementary parts of education, much more benefit would result from their labours. This is so very important a point in the dispensations of charity, that too much cannot be said on the subject. In addition to this, great care should be taken to have them taught some useful trade. Without this, they will in all probability, be indigent and miserable through life.

Much credit is due to the humane founders of those institutions, designed for the reception of aged and respectable old women, belonging to particular religious persuasions. They are thus rescued from want, and saved the disagreeable necessity of taking refuge in an alms-house. They are in all cases, persons who have lived well in early life, and to whom a state of poverty, or even the charity of an alms-house, would be almost insupportable.

Indigence, in itself, is not a source of evil, necessarily. But it is converted into a direful engine of extensive wretchedness, by its various concomitants. If mankind, generally, did not associate disrespect with a state of poverty, it would be easily supportable, and not so frequently prove the cause of so much distress. This, however, is a fault, which cannot easily be removed. It is fixed, deeply fixed in popular opinion, and the latter must be renovated, before the former can be abolished.

The distinctions between moral and immoral characters is not at all at variance with these remarks. It is rather a necessary appendage to complete the system. A vicious poor man should never receive so much regard, as a virtuous poor man. In all states of poverty a strict attention should be paid to circumstances, otherwise, much less good will follow the exercise of benevolent actions.

CHAPTER IV.

Provision for disabled Soldiers—A national Asylum for their reception—The children of wounded Soldiers to be supported by Government—An Asylum for them also.

OUR government has provided for the support of persons disabled in its service, by means of pensions. This necessary provision has always been productive of very beneficial consequences.

There are many, however, who are without families, and who would be much better situated in a public institution. For this reason, a national asylum should be erected, for the reception of all persons disposed to go there, who had been so maimed in the service of their country, as to be unable to gain a livelihood.

A capacious edifice should be erected in some agreeable situation, large enough to accommodate all who might be desirous of residing there. It should be provided with proper superintendents, and all the conveniences of life.

If such an establishment were formed, in which the soldier knew that he could be supported comfortably, on his return from the

noise of war, covered with wounds and scars, what an inducement would he realise, to fight the battles of his country boldly and faithfully? Thousands would enter the service willingly, who now hesitate, and even refuse.

But in addition to this, the government is bound by gratitude, to provide such an asylum for the war worn soldier. It is but just, that he who has defended his country's rights at the risk of his life, should be treated with kindness, and supported with liberality, after he has been maimed in so honourable a cause. What sight can be more disgraceful to any country, than that of a poor old soldier, begging in the public streets!

In such an asylum as that which I have suggested, there would be many, capable of doing some sort of work, by which some pecuniary emolument would accrue to the institution. Those who might possess the ability, would rather perform some kind of labour than remain idle. In addition to this, it would conduce to their health, to use occasionally a moderate degree of exertion, and moreover, it would prevent quarrelling or disputes, among those who might be so disposed.

In addition to an asylum of the kind now suggested, it would be proper to have another, for the children of those who may have been killed in the service of their country. In this asylum, the children, besides being supported, should be educated.

The good effects resulting from such an asylum, would be very great. The assurance, that his children would be well provided for, and even educated, would be ample encouragement to the soldier. The confidence in the liberality of his country, thus inspired, would prompt him to greater activity and fidelity. In addition to this, a love of country would be inspired in the breasts of the children. They would thus learn to venerate the country, whose gratitude for the services of the father, extended to the protection and support of his children. Such an asylum would beget in the breasts of all its subjects, that real love of country, of which so many boast, who are at the same time ignorant of its true nature.

The nominal patriots of our day, whose love of country extends no further than to mere professions, would do well to make a display of their boasted patriotism, by the erection of an edifice for the support of the infirm soldiers of our country. There are many among this class (for it is unhappily but too numerous) whose abilities would enable them to contribute largely to such an establishment.

Men of the above description, however, when urged on such topics, are but too apt to treat them with much indifference, or with total neglect. It is to be lamented, that while the real lovers of country, who delight in sup-

porting the honour of their government, by their solicitous regard for the happiness of the defenders of their country's rights, are very few in number, the brawling patriots of the day, whose chief care is self aggrandizement, are every where to be found. The latter kind of beings bring disgrace, not honour, to the country which they infest. They are at all times to be avoided, as dangerous men ; they cannot exist but by their duplicity.

In some countries, national burial grounds have been formed, for no other purpose than to inspire an attachment to the government. But these are of trifling consequence compared to asylums for the reception of disabled soldiers, and their children. The former can render no service to those, who are made the subjects of them, for if they be tributes of respect at all, they are posthumous tributes only, and of course, not worth a name. But the latter are monuments of gratitude, to be realised and enjoyed, by the aged and infirm. They are designed to make the close of life comfortable, and the last hours of existence happy. They are designed to protect the orphan, to raise him through the period of youth, and to inspire in his breast, a lasting veneration for his country. For these reasons, such institutions are truly desirable. The country, whose rulers are influenced by prudence and judgment, will not long remain in

want of these necessary characteristics of national greatness.

It would be no difficult matter to form in such an asylum, an extensive seminary, in which many might be educated in the discipline of government, whose talents at a future day, might serve to direct the affairs of the nation. At all events, a great number of children might be there instructed, who would otherwise, have remained ignorant, and perhaps miserable through life.

It is high time, that some such institutions as these, should be formed. It is indeed, disgraceful, that those who have been wounded in the defence of their country, should terminate their existence, in the sick wards of a badly regulated alms house. It is not less to be lamented, that the orphans of those who have fallen in battle, are not taken into the public charge, supported and educated at the public expense. What are a few hundred acres of land, or of what consequence is a pitiful pension, to the wounded and disabled soldier? How much better would it be, to have a national asylum, in which he could repose in comfort, and end his days in peace! The subject is of infinite importance, and well merits the notice of our government.

Let it not be understood, from the preceding remarks, that I am an advocate for war. Far be it from me, to stand forth as the champion of such a measure; I conceive it to be

not only opposed to the spirit of philanthropy, but also repugnant to reason. I grant that it is indeed, natural, or in other words, that it is a state of nature. The brute creation evince a state of warfare on frequent occasions ; and in proportion to the want of the exercise of reason, will be the prevalence of this warlike disposition. But although I consider war to be irrational, yet there are some circumstances which may render it necessary. On this account, it is highly proper, to provide for every exigency ; and one of the most important things to be attended to, is the support of those who have been disabled in the service of their country. These and their offspring have claims on the government, under which they live, which the most friendly regard can scarcely compensate. It, therefore, becomes a free people, to reward, at least with hospitality, those who have suffered in the maintenance of their rights.

I have not included sailors in the above remarks ; but the same observations are equally applicable to them. They have added lustre to our national character, and their services should meet the reward which is due to them.

There is in short, no class of men, who have rendered their country a service at any time, who do not merit our respect. They should be caressed when unfortunate, we should succour them in indigence. Let this free, this happy country, that has been so long distin-

guished for its peculiar privileges, embellish its national character, by acts of hospitality and benevolence. May the period soon arrive, when the United States shall be as celebrated for the love of charity, as for the love of Liberty and Independence, that pervades the hearts of the people !

CHAPTER V.

Diseases of Infancy—Mortality of the Summer-sickness—Hospital for poor sick children—Old age—Conclusion.

WHEN Lord Bacon declared, that “knowledge is power,” he had, no doubt, a reference to the general diffusion of Science. The nature of the human mind is such, that it will ever be eager for the acquisition of information, in proportion as it has already learned. Much labour has been employed during the last century, to establish a rational system of education; and it has been imagined by some, that the object has been attained. This, however, is far from being the case; for no system of education can be perfect, unless it embraces every species of knowledge, that can add to the comfort and happiness of life.

The late Professor Rush anticipated the time when medical principles will be taught in our seminaries of learning, and when the mass of mankind will be tolerably well acquainted with the mode of curing diseases. “Yes,” said this illustrious physician, “the time, I believe will come, when, from the perfection of our science, men shall be so well acquainted with the mode of destroying poi-

sons, that they 'shall tread upon scorpions and serpents,' without being injured by them. Suspended animation, if it should occur in that enlightened state of the world, shall no more expose the subjects of it to premature interment. Pestilential diseases shall then cease to spread terror and death over half the globe, for interest and prejudice shall no longer oppose the removal of the obvious and offensive causes which produce them. Hospitals shall be unknown. The groans of pain, the ravings of madness, and the sighs of melancholy shall be heard no more. The cradle and the tomb, shall no longer be related, for old age shall then be universal."

Such are the remarks of the most enlightened physician that ever adorned the world. He wished the profession of medicine to be stripped of every thing that looked like mystery and imposture, and to clothe it in a dress so simple and intelligible, that it might become a part of academical education in all seminaries of learning. "Truth," said he, "is simple upon all subjects, but upon those which are essential to the general happiness of mankind, it is obvious to the meanest capacity. There is no man so simple, that cannot be taught to cultivate grain, and no woman so devoid of understanding as to be incapable of learning how to make that grain into bread. And shall the means of preserving our health by the culture and preparation

of aliment be so intelligible, and yet the means of restoring it, when lost, be so abstruse, as to require years of study to discover and apply them ? To suppose this is to call in question, the goodness of the Supreme Being.”

“ In no one of the acts of man do we behold more weakness and error, than in the present modes of education. We teach our sons words at the expense of things. We teach them what was done two thousand years ago, and conceal from them what is doing every day. We teach them to predict eclipses, and the return of comets, from which no physical advantages worth naming have ever been derived, but we give them no instruction in the signs which precede general and individual diseases. How long shall the mind bend beneath the usages of ancient and barbarous times ? When shall we cease to be mere scholars, and become wise philosophers and useful men ? ” I consider these remarks as the best recommendation for the general diffusion of medical knowledge, and I am proud of the present opportunity of avowing my attachment to such principles.

I know that many who are called members of the medical profession, will find fault with this undertaking. They will consider it as a kind of larceny, by which I deprive them of part of their subsistence. But I know, assuredly, that no man who learned from Rush, who imbibed his principles, will murmur in

the least. Such characters will be pleased with every attempt to disseminate the important truths which their great preceptor promulgated ; they will rejoice to behold that era, when medical knowledge shall be familiarised to the multitude. In so rejoicing, they will only discover their good sense, and show that they are true philanthropists.

If these remarks produce no other effect, than to enable those who read it to watch the practice of their physicians, to guard against the encroachments of empiricism, I shall be amply repaid for my labour. But I hope it will do more ; I trust that it will tend to make every man his own physician, in all cases which are not apparently desperate.

It must be confessed, however, that an acquaintance with the healing art, must be unknown to certain classes of mankind ; I mean those who lead lives of habitual intemperance, or who labour under mental imbecility. But fortunately, these are not destitute of medical resources. Dispensaries have been established and hospitals have been erected in different parts of our country, where the best medical attendance is given to those who are unqualified to manage their own infirmities, or the diseases of each other. For, let it be understood, that no person should attempt the cure of his own diseases, when they are violent or dangerous, since a sick man is never a wise man.

To Dispensaries, the poor of all descriptions have free access, and these supply the place of individual acquaintance with the phenomena and cure of disease.

Persons affected with madness, are necessarily excluded from that class of men, who may acquire an useful degree of medical knowledge. Happily, however, these are not left to the rude hands of nature, on this account. Asylums for insanity have reared their hospitable heads in various parts of our country. They should be encouraged by all persons; because all classes of men may have equal occasion to participate in their benefits; for human nature, in every form, becomes the mournful object of such institutions. Other diseases permit man to be a rational and moral agent; but lunacy subverts the whole character, extinguishes every tender charity, and excludes the degraded sufferer from all the enjoyments and advantages of social intercourse.

In this disease, it is plain, that more than a mere superficial knowledge of medicine is requisite in order to effect a cure. Its mode of treatment, therefore, must still remain with physicians, with those who have studied the whole nature of man, both physical and mental. For it must be remembered, that mere physical knowledge alone, will not be sufficient; the profoundest skill in the philosophy of human nature, is requisite.

Besides all these exceptions, there are

others, which should be consigned, exclusively, to the practitioner of surgery. Cases of this kind cannot become the familiar objects of mankind, generally, because, a considerable space of time, and much practice is necessary, in order to fortify the mind for the performance of delicate and painful operations.

But notwithstanding all these exceptions, the general principle is still a good one. Men who possess adequate talents, should devote a portion of their time to the study of the outlines of medicine. Parents, thus instructed, would be enabled to prevent half the diseases of their children, by opposing them in their forming state. They could do this easier than physicians, because they are more constantly in company with them, and of course are more familiar. If such knowledge were thus generally diffused, the physician would not be so often roused from his slumber, to mitigate a transient pain, or to remove a trifling illness. Three or four physicians and surgeons would then be sufficient for a whole city. "Casualties," as Dr. Rush well observed, "will render professional characters necessary;" and such diseases as occur rarely, will always require medical aid.

My object in this treatise is to impress on the mind those correct principles in medicine, without which, no man can prescribe with any degree of certainty of success. Having embraced these principles, it will be easy, to

understand most of the insulated facts in medicine, and to administer remedies with judgement and accuracy. No longer will a medicine be received as a magic power, whose operation is too obscure to be known ; but every dose will then be given for some obvious purpose, and on reasonable grounds.

Some of the medical profession may esteem this plan as degrading to the philosophy of their science ; but it is far otherwise. Benevolence may bestow its regard on a few objects, and even thus contracted, it will be amiable. But when it flows from the tender soul of a hospitable Howard, and scatters its benign influence over whole countries, its splendour for a while, obscures the depravity of human nature. And what is medicine, but a grand system of benevolence ?

May the time soon come, when the nature of the human structure, both physical and mental, shall constitute an essential part of polite education, and be a characteristic mark of an enlightened mind ! The constitution of man is a subject of great importance, and one that is highly pleasing to the inquirer after knowledge.

The formation of man from the dust of the earth, teaches us that his body is a material fabric. He is then, on an equality with every other form in nature, only differing in his external appearance and internal conformation. We are taught by the researches of the late

Dr. Rush, that animal life originated in and is perpetuated by the agency of impressions acting on our bodies. We are moved, as a ship by the wind and tide, and could not exist for one moment, if impressions ceased to operate. These impressions are the air around us, the aliment we eat, and every other circumstance which can possibly assist in the support of a living body.

It is not improbable, but that life may be the result of chemical affinities; but with this, we are not to be concerned at present. Our object is to impress on the mind, that from the very first moment of our existence we are necessarily dependent on external agents, there is no source of life within us, no power capable of preserving us an instant, but that all is passive, and influenced by impressions. "We are kept alive," said a philosopher, "by force, for all the agents that support life act necessarily, as much so as the wind to move a passive ship."

All that remains to be said of disease, is dependent on this principle. We cure disease by a knowledge of the phenomena of life during the healthy state. Knowing that life is the result of a certain quantity of stimuli acting on our bodies, we regulate the powers of medicine, accordingly, for the restoration of lost health. Without some knowledge of this kind, all medical practice would be gross em-

piricism, and all our success would be merely accidental.

This being the case, it is highly important, to bear in mind a general view of the nature of life; to know by what means it is produced, and supported. Thus informed we will be better able to reason in medicine, to form an opinion of disease, and to decide on the remedies most proper to effect a cure. A knowledge of all the minute circumstances requisite to a full investigation of the subject, is not absolutely requisite for the present purpose. A general acquaintance will suffice, to direct the zealous inquirer in the right path.

The subject of *Predispositions*, is important, and every person should possess a general knowledge of it.

The name Predisposition was substituted by Dr. Rush in the place of Temperaments. Several synonyms have been employed, as Idiosyncracies, Individual peculiarities, &c. either of which would answer equally well with predisposition, as conveying the same idea. But I prefer the latter, because it conveys more immediately to the mind, the thing meant.

The predominance of this or that system of organs modifies the whole animal economy, impresses obvious differences on the results of organization, and has not less influence over the moral and intellectual, than over the physical faculties. Those who have used the term

Temperaments, have divided them into several different kinds ; this division is so unphilosophical, as to give improper ideas of the seat of disease. Thus, the Sanguineous temperament presupposes disease in the blood, whereas it should place it in the vessels. The Bilious temperament presupposes disease of the bile, whereas the primary seat of the disease is in the liver. Thus it is with all the Temperaments ; their application is necessarily connected with the humoral pathology of the old schools of Medicine. For these reasons, it is best to adopt the term **Predisposition**.

By predisposition is meant, an aptitude or tendency, either natural or acquired, in any part of the body, to take on and produce diseased action. Native predisposition is that which we bring into the world at birth ; it may be *filial* and *hereditary*. It is filial when a disease is derived from the father or mother; it is hereditary, when derived from any ancestor. A filial disease is always hereditary, but a hereditary disease is not always filial. When all the ancestors have been affected with any disease, that disease in any of the children, will be hereditary. But if the disease has affected the family, no farther back than the father or mother, then the disease in the offspring is filial.

Acquired predispositions are such as follow improper treatment at birth, and during early

infancy; such as falls, bruises, injurious stimulating substances rubbed on the body, &c. From acquired predisposition, as well as that which is natural, may result both hereditary and filial disease. A natural predisposition, which would otherwise be filial in the offspring, may become an acquired predisposition in subsequent generations, by which the natural family predisposition will be destroyed. Is it asked, how predisposition can be explained? I answer, that it results from a peculiar arrangement of the organic particles of the human body.

Dr. Rush used to enumerate several different predispositions, named according to the greater tendency in one part than another, to take on and produce morbid action. They are the arterial, muscular, nervous, cutaneous, alimentary, hepatic, lymphatic, nephritic, and phrenitic predispositions. Some persons are possessed of more than one of these, but all are born with one of them. They sometimes prevail in succession, in the course of life. Thus, in infancy, the alimentary and cutaneous predispositions predominate. In more advanced life, the arterial, muscular, nervous, &c. according to difference of age.

In the arterial predisposition, the arteries are affected, chiefly, and the disease is, fever. In the muscular predisposition, spasms occur, and so on through the whole list of predispositions.

The most important part of the subject of predispositions, is that which relates to acquired predisposition. Knowing the causes that may induce an aptitude to disease, we are better able to guard against their operation, and thus to prevent the occurrence of disease, very frequently. In this knowledge, and the due application of it, consists, in very great measure, the surest means of preserving health. There are many, very many circumstances obviously prejudicial to health, which might be avoided with great ease. Thus exposure to great vicissitudes of weather, without due precautions, the excessive use of certain articles, known to be injurious to particular constitutions, all exert a baneful influence on the system, and tend to produce disease.

It is only by adapting the stimuli of life to the circumstances of the system, and thus carefully guarding against every agent capable of destroying health, that we can effectually escape the ravages of disease. Health consists in an exact equilibrium of all the powers of the animal economy, and it requires but a feeble cause in many instances, to turn the scale, and produce a preponderance in favour of disease.

He therefore, and he only, who reflects on the nature of the human fabric, and inquires into the circumstances which influence its healthy state, will ever be able to preserve his physical constitution in a sound condition.

The very little regard that is paid to the prevention of disease, demands our attention to the means of curing it when formed. When it wrecks the body, and prevails in all its violent forms, it arouses us to a sense of the value of health, and the great importance of attending to its preservation. We are unable to estimate any blessing rightly, but by contrast. Thus pleasure would cease to possess half its attractive force, if we were not sensible of the distress produced by its opposite, pain. Virtue would lose most of its charms, if vice did not rise in competition, and thus increase its splendor by comparison. So with health; we know not what is its real worth, until it is supplanted by disease. Strange that such apathy should prevail in the minds of men. But strange as it is, it is nevertheless true. It becomes therefore our duty, to attend to the restoration of this blessing when it has been lost, and to endeavour, by every exertion to eradicate disease from the family of mankind.

The distresses incident to disease call upon the benevolent and humane, by all the endearing ties of nature. But, the good of society is so much concerned in the infant race, that an attention to their diseases, is of infinite consequence.

Never spake the sacred historian more truly, than when he declared, "that man is born to trouble," that he inherits, for his birth, the miseries of his ancestors. This allotment of

human nature is not only unavoidable, but it is highly useful. It enables us to form a better estimate of happiness ; we learn to appreciate pleasure, by its contrast with pain.

There are two periods in human life, the phenomena of which bear a striking resemblance to each other. These are, infancy and old age, the two extremes of our existence. It is therefore justly said, "that we are once men, and twice children."

In both extremes of life, we lose our ability to act and to provide for our necessities ; and we are obliged to depend on the aid of others. But as old age is the sure precursor of the termination of life, it requires less solicitude, less watchful care, than the period of infancy. The latter has only commenced a career, and all is to come ; but the former has well nigh ended a course, in which all is past. On the rising offspring, rests the hope of the world. To this, the soldier looks with flattering anticipation for the defenders of his country ; - to this, the christian directs the eye of anxious expectation, for the pillars of the church and the ornaments of religion ; here virtue centers all her prospects, and benevolence beholds her future votaries. All that is desirable in life, is founded on the rising glory of the infant race.

An attempt has been made to estimate the proportion of children who die annually. At least, one fourth of all who pay the debt of na-

ture, have not attained the age of two years. This evil might be remedied in great measure, by a stricter attention to the diseases of infants. Every mother, of common understanding, who has raised one child, should be able to manage all her offspring, in the infant state, without the help of a physician. She cannot do this, however, without some sound medical knowledge. Mothers and fathers to a certain degree, from constant association with children, are much better calculated to judge correctly of their complaints, than physicians, who see them but a few times. They know the temper and disposition of children ; for they are discoverable at a very early period of life ; and they are of great importance in the treatment of infantile diseases.

The most fatal disease to which infants are exposed, is known by the name of the *Summer sickness* ; so called, because it occurs in warm weather. It is known to physicians by the name of *Cholera infantum*. It is often rapid in its progress and very frequently fatal in its termination, and destroys more children, than all the other diseases to which they are liable. On this account, it merits peculiar attention.

The symptoms of the Summer sickness are so familiar to every person, that it would be altogether superfluous to describe them. They are easily to be found, in the suburbs of our cities, in the course of a short walk through

a few of the filthy streets. The dejected head, hanging over a mother's arm, the pallid face and sunken eye, will not fail to denote the existence of this ravager of the infant race.

But it is not only in the huts of misery and want, that this disease finds its subjects; it frequently prevails in more exalted ranks. Various causes operate for its production, and all of them are under our control. Some unhealthy local circumstance may be sufficient to excite the disease. I believe, that the foul sinks in the cellars of many fine houses, are frequently the sources of this, and other affections. Whatever is obviously unclean, and odious to any of the senses, may produce the Summer sickness. Where it prevails in the suburbs of a city, in the neighbourhood of ponds of stagnant water, or adjacent to piles of filth, in which vegetable and animal matter is putrifying, there can be no difficulty in determining what has produced the disease. For one of the remedies in such cases, is a removal to the healthy atmosphere of a country situation; and without a change of air it is almost a physical impossibility to restore the young patient.

But as the children of poor people are the proper subjects of Dispensaries and other charitable institutions, I shall direct my remarks to parents in higher life. The children of these may be divided into two classes; first, those who are nourished solely by the

mother; secondly, those who are able to masticate their food.

First. Of those children who are nourished solely by the mother.

Where no local circumstance of an unwholesome nature exists, such as a foul sink, &c. the disease must be attributed either to the cutting of teeth, or to the milk of the mother; since it is well known, that this secretion is often contaminated with various substances, that have been taken as articles of food. The mother may have eaten unripe fruit, or some other article of an unwholesome quality, and thus the disease of the child may have been produced. For it must be remembered, that there is a vast difference between the local and general circumstances of the infantile and adult constitution. So that, altho' the mother might not be injured by any article of her food, yet the secretion by which her infant is nourished, may contain noxious qualities, capable of exciting disease. In such cases, a strict attention must be paid to diet, and to every circumstance that can affect the healthy condition of the milky secretion. The diet, which will be mentioned, as proper for patients labouring under cholera, should be used by the mother; for it will ultimately produce the desired effect on the child, who partakes of it, through the medium of the milk. Even many of the medicines, which are proper for patients in this disease, might be taken

by the mother; for they often produce the salutary effects expected from them, in this way.

When the cutting of teeth is painful, it often excites, by sympathy, a disease in the stomach and bowels, which is sometimes removed by cutting the gum, and thereby enabling the tooth to protrude.

Secondly. Of children who are able to masticate their food.

These have ceased in some measure, to devolve, exclusively, on maternal care. They no longer require the breast, for nature has kindly furnished them with teeth, by which they are enabled to take the nourishment that is requisite, without much assistance. It is, however, because parents resign their children so much to the hands of nature, at this period, that they are troubled with this distressing disease. They are suffered to appropriate their teeth to whatever use they please, without any kind of restraint, and consequently (for they are not capable of judging for themselves), many things are eaten, which are absolutely pernicious to health, and which finally prove destructive to life. If it were possible, children should never be allowed the use of their teeth, but at certain times, which should be judiciously fixed upon. If they are ignorant of that which is best adapted to their own welfare, the chief means of injuring their happiness should not be left in their free possession.

These means are their teeth; for all their other sources of injury combined, cannot be so extensively hurtful, as those instruments, which were designed to be used, but not to be misapplied.

In children, therefore, who are no longer suckled, the avenues of this disease, are the teeth chiefly. Its occurrence in the *Summer* season, naturally leads to the productions of that season, as its cause. These are unripe vegetable matters of all kinds, or an excessive quantity of those, which are ripe. The latter circumstance is not less frequent than the former; for it is a lamentable fact, that most children are gluttons.

Besides vegetable matters; there is no doubt, that animal substances occasion the disease. I believe that the constant use of fresh meat in the summer season, is highly improper, and that from this alone, many cases of cholera are produced. It seems to lessen the vigorous tone of the stomach, in such a manner, as to subject it to disease from the most trivial causes. Copious draughts of very cold water are also very apt to disorder the stomach, and thus to induce the disease under consideration.

The remedies must be adapted to the state of the system. Recollect, that disease consists in low or high morbid action, and that the one calls for stimulants, the other for sedatives. The system is sometimes highly excited in

this disease, and bleeding is strenuously demanded. It must be used cautiously, however, for no disease prostrates the system more rapidly, than this.

Where the patient has been much reduced by vomiting and purging, and these discharges still continue to be profuse, it is often necessary to administer laudanum. This stimulates the debilitated stomach first, and then the whole system. If liquid laudanum will not remain on the stomach, resort to opium pills.

Where there is neither much debility, nor increased action, and the discharges are slimy, it will be proper to administer some cathartic medicine, to correct the quality of the discharges, and to remove the offending matters from the stomach and bowels; of these, the *Spiced Rhubarb* is not the least important; a tea-spoonful every half hour to a child of a year or a year and a half old, will be likely to produce gentle discharges and thus be very serviceable. Three or four grains of calomel and as much calcined magnesia, given to a child of the same age, has frequently been useful.

An ounce or two of Castor oil rubbed well with a little sugar and gum arabic, may be given in doses of a tea-spoonful each, every half hour, until free, natural discharges are produced.

The vomiting when violent is often easily checked by means of seltzer water, or by a

tea-spoonful of lime water, or by a few drops of laudanum. An infusion of Larkspur leaves checks vomiting in most cases, very speedily. The pains in the stomach and the sickness have been frequently relieved by the application of a spice plaster over the stomach ; this plaster is made by rubbing powdered Cinnamon, allspice, &c. with mutton suet, till the whole is intimately combined. Sometimes a blister applied over the stomach is very useful, and where the system is very low, sinapisms of flour and mustard equal parts, moistened with vinegar, may be placed on the ancles. They stimulate locally and draw excitement from other parts.

But, notwithstanding the utility of different medicines in this disease, there is no part of the mode of cure, so important, as that which relates to the diet of the patient.

The stomach during hot weather requires to be constantly stimulated, in a gentle manner, at least. In some of the warm countries in Europe, the inhabitants are compelled to eat spices, in order to preserve the tone of their stomachs.

Salt in a separate state, salt food of every description, spices of various kinds, are highly important remedies in the treatment of Cholera. If the patient be a sucking infant, the mother should eat moderately of spiced food, and she should never eat meat, unless it be salted. Fresh meat is absolutely injurious. By thus

attending to her own diet, she will be able to regulate the state of the child's stomach. In addition to this, as we have already observed, sore gums should be relieved by cutting.

But when the patient is further advanced in life, the opportunities of giving proper food are more extensive. Salt victuals only should be allowed. In all cases, the patient should be restrained from the use of cold water; barley water, mint tea, or chicken water, well spiced and salted, should be used as the common drink. The latter, where it can be obtained, is the best. The cinnamon makes the water pleasing to the taste, and very grateful to the stomach.

There is often a natural propensity in children, labouring under this disease, to eat salt food. I have frequently seen a child, biting at a salt herring, and I have always encouraged this happy inclination; for nothing can be better calculated to restore the lost vigor of the stomach than such articles. The country air should not be neglected when it can conveniently be obtained. Children should be removed from the noxious atmosphere of the city, as soon as possible. The air of the most cleanly part of a city is foul compared with the salubrious breezes of a rural situation. The stomach very soon realises the advantages of such changes, and through the stomach the whole system is invigorated.

The prevalence and destructive effects of

this disease among the poor of our cities, should lead the humane and charitable to some means of obviating the evil. If a hospital could be provided at a few miles distance from the city, where good attendance could be obtained, it would no doubt be the means of saving many hundred children. A house of moderate size might be so managed as to be able to hold fifty or a hundred sick children at once. They should be attended by a proper number of faithful nurses, and every kind of accommodation should be provided. Thus I am sure, that more than half the mortality of this disease might be counteracted. An institution of this sort is much wanted, for it is certain, that many children die in the summer season, from a want of proper treatment.

Although careful attention to the rising race is of more absolute consequence to our country, than the strictest regard to the welfare of the aged and infirm, yet, respect and the tender sympathies of nature call upon us to exert ourselves in mitigating the sufferings incident to the last days of life.

Old age is the natural inheritance of many of the human family. It reduces man to his infant state, and renders him as unfit for self-preservation, as he was in the earliest period of youth.

“ Oh what is life by golden love umblest?
Be mine, ere then, eternally to rest;

The furtive kiss (soft pledge) and genial tie
 Are flowers of youth that, passing, smile and die.
 Old age succeeds, and dulls each finer sense,
 When all we hope at most, is reverence.
 Age brings misfortune clearer to our view,
 And choaks the spring, whence all our joys we
 drew,
 And scatters frowns and thins the silvery hair,
 Hateful to youth, unlovely to the fair.
 Ah me ! alike o'er youth and age I sigh,
 Impending age and youth that hastens by.
 Swift as a thought, the flying moments roll,
 Swift as a racer speeds to reach the goal ;
 Damps chill my brow, my pulses flattering beat,
 Whene'er the vigorous pride of youth I meet,
 Pleasant and lovely ; hopeful to the view,
 As golden visions and as transient too,
 But oh ! no terrors stop, nor vows assuage,
 The coming gloom of unrelenting age."

The various appearances of old age are familiar to all, and of course need no description. They all indicate, that the machine has been worn out by long use, or that it has been rendered unfit for service, by the abuse of its powers.

The important point now to be attended to, is the proper mode of rendering old age comfortable, and of making its termination tolerable. This object can be attained, only, by a strict attention to the laws of the animal economy, and to the nature of life. We know that a certain quantity or force of stimuli, is at all times necessary to keep the body alive ;

consequently, in old age, the stimuli must be proportioned to the powers of the system.

As soon as the teeth begin to fall from their sockets, and the lower jaw to indicate by its great projection the termination of life, we are taught that the same kind of food which served the purpose of middle life, is now improper. Animal matter can no longer be perfectly digested, for the teeth have ceased to perform their masticating office. The loss of teeth, thus bringing us back to the state of infancy, reminds us of the nourishment suitable for early life, and indicates the necessity of returning to the use of it. The whole system is debilitated, almost to the grade of infantile weakness ; of course, the drinks which were taken in mature age, are unfit at this season. Wine, and ardent spirits are deemed improper for infants, except occasionally, by way of medicine ; and, why should not the same principle be adhered to in old age, that period when the system resumes its pristine condition ?

Every circumstance that can effect the system, should be regulated, with a strict regard to the constitutional powers. If this be not attended to, it is impossible that health can be enjoyed.

It has been supposed that old age and disease are necessarily connected ; but this is not the case. Many persons have livid happy, and in the possession of physical and mental

sanity, during many of the closing years of a long life.

Exertion, where it is used at all, should be moderate, and fatigue should always be carefully avoided. For it is very apt to induce disease, and thus hasten the approach of death.

The stomach of an old person should never be too full ; a little food, taken very frequently in the course of a day, is much better than a large quantity taken at the usual times of eating.

The powers of the body decay with the same regularity, with which they were acquired in early life. So also do the mental faculties; these decline gradually, and in a certain order. The various senses lose their vivacity, and memory, that noble ornament of the mind, hastens to destruction.

The pains which render existence miserable, at the close of life, may often be mitigated. It is the dignified province of medicine, to soothe the sorrows of old age, to soften the pangs of disease, and to repress the groans of the dying sufferer.

The sympathising soul of the immortal Rush, bent with tenderness over the agonies of the hour of dissolution. He knew well, that he was fast verging to the silent tomb ; and knowing that he, too, might share in the pangs of death, that his last hour might need all the comfort that medicine could afford, he felt for other's woes. His generous heart throbbed

with pity, when he beheld the pains which attended the passage out of life ; and he studied attentively to soothe those pains, to smooth the few remaining steps of life's short course. He laboured with success, and millions yet unborn shall bless him, whose philanthropic soul overlooked all ranks and distinctions of men, in his general interest for the welfare of mankind.

He taught, that violent pain is often best relieved by means of the lancet. A few ounces of blood drawn from the arm, prevent lethargy, and lessen sensibility. This remedy and many others, must be used, only those cases, in which nature and reason conspire to show that life cannot be presented. Blisters by exciting pain in parts, not affected, relieve the pain of vital parts that are diseased. Small doses of opium, and cordial drinks relieve pain.—Let the appetite be indulged. The warm bath is also a very useful article ; it acts like opium, by equalising excitement. The application of sweet oil to different parts of the body has frequently relieved pain.

Patients in their last hours should never be left alone ; they become sad, when solitary. Man is by nature a fearful creature, and company is necessary, especially in sickness, to give him fortitude.

I have already advocated the utility of public asylums, for various purposes. But I believe, that the liberality of the humane could not

be bestowed for a more useful and laudable end, than for the erection of an asylum, for the reception of the aged poor. The inclinations and desires common to this period of life, are so contrary to those of earlier years, that an indiscriminate mixture of young and old could not fail to render the latter, less happy than if they were kept by themselves.

We find among the aged poor, many who have been once ornaments of society, many, who have fought the battles of their country, many who in the days of their affluence have been hospitable and humane. And shall these, who are now deserted by good fortune, who are forsaken by the friends of their better days, be neglected in their last moments by fellow men, destined perhaps, to the same unhappy condition ? Surely not ; the spirit of benevolence still retains its accustomed vigor, and the flame of sympathy still glows in the bosoms of the charitable.

The money that is expended for the erection of charitable institutions is never spent in vain. The celebrated Dean Swift, who was so instrumental in the establishment of an asylum for the insane, terminated his existence in that very asylum. Little did he imagine, that the liberality which he was extending to others, would ever be experienced by himself. But, alas, he too realised the overthrow of his rational powers, and his own asylum was destined to the care and preservation of

its humane founder. And who is there among the charitable that shall one day or other honor our country with such establishments, as **I** have proposed, that may not be reduced to the necessity of participating in the bounties of those institutions, either by their children, or in their own persons? We know not what may be, for the affairs of human life are uncertain. The glories of to-day nipt by the frost of adversity, may be converted into sadness by to-morrow. Our own welfare, and the happiness of others, urge us, to do unto others as we would have them to do unto us.

CONCLUSION.

In the conclusion of this Treatise, I shall make a few more remarks on the subject of the alms-house.

This topic has been more closely investigated of late, than in years past; and it is to be hoped that the investigation will be of eminent service. The accounts that have been published of the comparative expenses and receipts of the Philadelphia and Lancaster alms-houses, plainly discover a great want of prudence in the management of the former. The average number of patients in the Philadelphia alms-house is said to have been about 760, that of the Lancaster alms-house about 140. The

receipts of money, arising from the labour of the paupers in the latter institution, nearly equal those in the Philadelphia alms-house ; while its expenditures exceed those of the Lancaster, by about twelve thousand dollars. This would scarcely be credited by a person, unacquainted with the facts ; because it might be supposed, that a given number of paupers could be maintained in one place, at as low a rate, as in the other, the price of different articles being very nearly the same in both places.

The truth of the matter is, that the Philadelphia alms-house is managed about as badly as it can be ; and the only consolation that remains is, that if a change should occur, it cannot be for the worse. I know very little of the minute concerns of the Lancaster alms-house, but this much, I do know, that from the very nature of their annual accounts, a greater degree of prudence and judgment must exist in the management of that institution, than in ours. If this were not the case, there could not possibly be such a disproportion between the products of the two Institutions. If the labour of the paupers in the Lancaster alms-house be capable of yielding 2307 dollars, the labor of 760 paupers in the Philadelphia alms-house should yield at least 12000 dollars ; instead of this sum, however, we find the products amounting to no more than 2800 dollars.

I am very sure, that there are hundreds in the Philadelphia alms-house who do little or nothing, who might, by some kind of labour, earn something. Even the ideots in that institution, by careful superintendence, might be employed to some profit. But besides these, there are many, strolling about the yard, in idleness, whose labour would be some source of emolument.

If the business were conducted as it should be, there would not be one idle person in the whole establishment, excepting such as might be indisposed by sickness, &c.

The manufactures in the Philadelphia alms-house, if judiciously managed, would go very far to defray all the expenses of the institution. If these were made more extensive, there would then be sufficient room for the employment of all the paupers in the house.

An important source of the difference in the expenditures between the Lancaster and Philadelphia alms-houses, is the maniacal department of the latter institution. Owing to want of accommodations in our alms-house, many of the insane paupers have been sent to the Pennsylvania Hospital. The managers of this institution, instead of receiving these paupers free of expense, have exacted payment, and the sum received by the hospital on this account, is about 6000 dollars.

If I were to give my opinion relative to this expense, in as few words as possible, I would

say, that it was 6000 dollars wasted, or if smoother language would be more agreeable, I might say with much propriety, that the money thus spent, was most injudiciously misapplied. How then is this evil to be remedied ? I answer, by having within the walls of the alms-house, the necessary accommodations for the insane. A building should be erected on the south side of the alms-house square, sufficiently large to contain all the insane paupers. The very nature of insanity requires that an asylum for patients labouring under this disease, should be remote from the other buildings. Such an edifice could be built for about three thousand dollars ; and thus besides the advantage of having the insane separate from the other paupers, it would be no longer necessary to incur an expense of several thousand dollars, on account of paupers sent to the hospital. The mad-house thus established and well managed, would soon become an excellent school for the study of maniacal diseases ; and this, together with the medical and surgical wards, and other advantages to be suggested hereafter, would constitute the best school of medicine in the United States of America.

A house was lately built within the walls of the alms-house, for the purpose of having a Library room, apartments for the accommodation of paupers with diseases of the eye, and an amphitheatre for the performance of

surgical operations. But a part of the design of this establishment has been frustrated by the agency of the managers of the Pennsylvania hospital. By this means, surgical cases have been kept from the notice of the alms-house physicians, and the hospital has reaped the advantages.

To convert the alms-house into an useful and profitable institution, it would be well to establish a regular order of Professorships on the different branches of medicine. Men qualified for the task, could be procured without difficulty; and as the amphitheatre already mentioned, is sufficiently capacious to hold two hundred students, there would be no necessity for a new building. If the Professors, were empowered to confer degrees, there is no doubt, that a respectable class could be procured. The professors should be appointed by the corporation of the city and liberties, to hold their station during good behaviour; and they should receive the fees for tickets of attendance on the lectures, as their compensation.

The students of the University of Pennsylvania are obliged to attend the practice of the hospital; and to pay for that attendance, ten dollars a year. If eight dollars were exacted from the students attending the alms-house, under the contemplated plan, a considerable emolument would arise from this source. It would be the interest of the Professors to

make the instruction as extensive as possible ; and with a little care, this might be made much more useful than that of any other institution.

The alms-house, thus constituted, would present an important theatre for the study of medicine. The Lying-in department of the alms-house is much better calculated for the instruction of students, than any similar institution in this country. The variety of surgical and medical cases is greater, by far, than that in the hospital, and with a little more care in the accommodation of patients, the alms-house would be, perhaps, the best school for the study of disease, in the world. In its present imperfect state, it is highly prized, by those who know its importance for the fund of instruction which it contains.

But if it should not be deemed prudent to establish Professorships, it is very important, at all events, to pay more attention to the maniacal department of the alms-house. A building, such as I have suggested, should be erected for the accommodation of insane paupers ; this should be attended to on the principle of economy. A house of this sort, would be the means of saving several thousand dollars annually, and it would remove the dependence on the hospital, which has subsisted for so long a time. In fact, the two institutions should be entirely distinct, each resting on its own proper basis.

Error has prevailed long enough, and it is

high time that the management of the alms-house were corrected. Let a change take place in the general regulations, let the manufacturing department be conducted with propriety, and place the medical department on a rational basis. Thus improved, our alms-house would no longer lose by comparison with other institutions of a similar nature. It would then exhibit a well ordered system ; a system of extensive, and genuine benevolence. A few remarks on the various, domestic sources of disease, shall close this treatise.

He, who contributes to the health of his fellow men, renders them an essential service ; and is, thus far entitled to the appellation of a benevolent man.

The business of a physician does not consist simply in restoring health ; his more important destiny is to obstruct the avenues of disease, and thereby preserve the sanity of the human body. In a large city like Philadelphia, this branch of the duties of a Physician, is rendered highly important. The varied modes of life, necessarily arising out of the immense variety of characters and dispositions, present a scene so heterogeneous in its nature, that to suppose a general prevalence of the same bodily condition, would be a substitution of conjecture in the room of fact.

The particular construction of a city, is a circumstance intimately connected with the health of its inhabitants. Narrow lanes and

confined alleys are, under certain conditions, the best nurseries of disease. The state of these, however, depends very much on the affluence or indigence of the people in their vicinity. Thus we find, let the cause be what it may, that alleys in the center of our city are always much cleaner than those in the suburbs. Perhaps this may be influenced by the better plan of government in the city corporation. Be this as it may ; the most thickly settled parts of Philadelphia labour under difficulties even worse than those which annoy the health of the citizens of the suburbs. In many parts, the erection of dwelling houses has precluded the possibility of having one of the conveniences of life separated from the dwelling. Hence we find the inhabitants in many parts, infested continually with the unwholesome effluvia of their privies. Would it not have been sound policy in the government to have arrested the inordinate desire of wealth, and thus guard against the evils adverted to, by preventing the owners of ground from making those inroads on the health of our citizens, which the total occupancy of ground by houses is calculated to produce ? The attention of our Legislature to this subject is imperiously demanded by the welfare of the next generation.

We fear not for the health of our city, provided a strict attention be paid to the removal of filth. Let cleanliness in the streets, be

but the motto of the health law, and we may rest in peace, undismayed by the terrors of that pestilence, which once stalked through our city at noon day.

But very different is the condition of the Southern part of Philadelphia, not as yet so generally populated as the city, it offers a much more fruitful source of disease. The western portion is the residence, chiefly, of the depraved and miserable. Untutored and savage in their dispositions, they are unmindful of the voice of reason. Constant intoxication, the too frequent partner of poverty, is a fatal source of misery and death. The very habits of such people, are calculated to blunt the ardour of the physician, and too often renders ineffectual his most judicious practice. In short, there is this difference between the depraved poor and the virtuous affluent in a medical point of view; In one case we have to combat with the disease only, in the other, all the horrors of mental wretchedness stare us in the face, and an uncommon share of firmness is often requisite to enable a young practitioner to acquit himself with honor.

But this is not all. The numerous ponds of stagnant waters, into which are thrown dead animals, and other unwholesome matter, are sufficient to produce almost general disease. In the vicinity of such offending matters, we often find, crammed into a small hut, six, eight, or perhaps ten people; filthy miserable and

sick. What if the physician is invoked? What if he administer medical aid till all the resources of his mind are exhausted? He anticipates the result, and if a distant ray of hope appear to animate him, it is soon dissipated by the reflection that the circumstances in which his patients are placed must counteract all his endeavours. In such a vicinity, the infant race is soon blasted by cholera. And it is an established maxim, founded on experience, that to effect a cure of this disease, under such circumstances is nearly impossible.

What then is the remedy for an evil of such magnitude? The subject is of great importance, and demands much attention.

The most essential part of the remedy for the evil is the removal of the many sources of putrid exhalations. This may be easily effected, by building on such vacant lots, or by occupying the seat of the water, with earth obtained in digging cellars, which is more wholesome than street dirt. The gutters should likewise be kept in a proper state of cleanliness. In short, we conceive, that justices of the peace, should be empowered to controul acts of uncleanliness, as much as violations of the law.

Another great source of disease, however strange it may sound, is the public market. Evils there exist, which ought not to be tolerated by the laws. Unsound meat, unripe and of course unwholesome vegetable matters

are productive of incalculable distress. The first appearance of fruit in our markets is a signal for disease, and perhaps more than half of the children, who die of the complaint, so common to them in the Summer season, are destroyed from this very cause. Of the difficulty of preserving this part of our race from the ravages of cholera, we have already spoken. We will offer a few more remarks on this subject.

Much of the public money has been expended on the erection of the City Hospital adjacent to Philadelphia. Hitherto, it has been of no real utility to the public. Now I ask, whether it would not be an act of humanity (as it certainly would be a charitable one) to appropriate that Hospital (or some similar building) to the reception of poor children labouring under the disease already mentioned? Its agreeable situation, the salubrity of the air, and other circumstances render it a fit place for this purpose. And why should so large and convenient a building remain unoccupied, when it might be the asylum of thousands, and afford to many a happy retreat from disease and death. A regard for the happiness and comfort of the indigent, should prompt the proper officers to an attention to this subject.

THE END.



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